



## News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Joe DiLaura

Tel. 317/232-3396

Cel. 317/431-4729

### **Region to receive \$2.1 million aimed at creating new jobs in emerging industries, shortage occupations**

MUNCIE, Ind. (June 7, 2006) -- Eastern Indiana will be awarded a grant from the state for \$2,114,082 to create new jobs in the emerging fields of agribusiness and entrepreneurship, Ron Stiver, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development announced today.

Stiver made the announcement at the Ball State Alumni Center at a meeting of business, economic and workforce development officials sponsored by the Muncie/Delaware County Chamber of Commerce and Ball State Miller College of Business.

"On behalf of Governor Mitch Daniels, we are pleased to award this grant to help local officials further develop the region's growing agribusiness/agriscience and entrepreneurship industries," Stiver said. "These occupational areas have been identified as having great potential for above average growth in upcoming years, and regional leaders have developed a sound plan to nurture and grow these important industries."

The grant awarded is part of the Daniels administration's Strategic Skills Initiative, a one-year state workforce development program which seeks to identify critical occupational and skill shortages and their causes throughout the state, and then fund grants to local consortia to develop solutions that address the shortages.

The region has proposed three solutions, which will be funded from the state grant:

- *Agri-Venture Initiative.* The cornerstone of this initiative is to assist in new venture creation within the agribusiness and agriscience industries. This will be accomplished by directing award monies towards supporting ventures in business plan formation, technology assessments, and feasibility studies. The long term goal of the initiative is to create 18 new business plans to create new investments in the region's growing agribusiness industry.
- *Advancing Entrepreneurship.* A new six-week intensive education program will be established at Ball State University for area high school students to help develop the students' entrepreneurial skills and talents. Students will complete a business plan and compete in an annual business plan competition. A total of 180 students will receive this training and each will develop a business plan.

- *Entrepreneurship Business Mentor.* Under this initiative, selected Ball State University MBA students will be exposed to new technologies and work with seasoned entrepreneurs and business professionals. Students will receive start-up resources to launch new business ventures in the region. Nine new MBA/entrepreneurs will be retained in Indiana, with five of these remaining in the region. The goal of the new ventures that will result from this project is \$150,000 in new revenue and 12 to 15 new jobs created.

Local philanthropic organizations and universities will be involved in nurturing the entrepreneurship programs.

The regional focus on agribusiness builds on an announcement last month from the Indiana Department of Agriculture. The east central Indiana region was one of two regions in the state selected to participate in the Agricultural Economic Development Initiative, a planning process aimed at identifying strategic opportunities to grow agricultural businesses. Under the initiative, local farmers, economic development officials, city planners, elected officials and agribusiness leaders will meet to discuss ideas for improving agriculture in the region.

“The agri-venture initiative and region’s focus on developing its agribusiness industry and last month’s planning announcement provide a great example of the collaborative spirit not only among state government, but throughout the region,” Stiver said. “Representatives from the public and private sector, labor and industry, higher education, and workforce and economic development officials all worked together to develop the solutions that we are funding with today’s grant.”

The state’s Strategic Skills Initiative seeks to identify critical occupational and skill shortages and their causes throughout the state, and then fund grants to local consortia to develop solutions that address the shortages. Last year, a grant of \$263,131 was awarded to the region for research and to identify the occupations, industries and skills projected to be in short supply. Today’s grant provides the region with funds to build on that research through specific projects which address those shortages.

The grant will be awarded to the East Central Indiana Workforce Investment Board, Inc, which oversees workforce activities in Blackford, Delaware, Henry, Jay, Randolph, Fayette, Rush, Union and Wayne counties.

The Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve employee skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with Indiana’s 26 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures and operates a statewide job placement service.

# Indiana Department of Workforce Development Strategic Skills Initiative

## Economic Growth Region 6



Mitch Daniels, Governor  
Ron Stiver, Commissioner  
June 2006

### About SSI

Governor Daniels' \$23 million Strategic Skills (SSI) Initiative aims to identify and alleviate job and skill shortages. The program will be carried out in Indiana's 11 economic regions through an ongoing process of identifying future shortages, determining the cause of those shortages, and developing solutions. Ultimately SSI will create jobs and increase personal income for Hoosiers.

### About Region 6

- Population (July 2005)  
**344,853**
- Labor Force (March 2006)  
**170,030**
- Unemployment (March 2006)  
**6.4%**
- Median Household Income  
**\$26,363 in 2004**

-Source: [www.hoosierdata.in.gov](http://www.hoosierdata.in.gov)

### Counties in Region

- Blackford
- Delaware
- Henry
- Rush
- Jay
- Randolph
- Wayne
- Fayette
- Union



INDIANA  
**WORKFORCE**  
DEVELOPMENT

### Economic Growth Region 6

**Economic Growth Region 6** is comprised of nine counties. The SSI re-search & identification allocation awarded in September 2005 was \$263,131. The SSI solutions allocation awarded in June 2006 is \$2,114,082. Methods used to identify shortages, root causes and to develop solutions were executive interviews, business roundtables, online surveys and focus groups.

Key Occupational Shortages	Projection 2005-2007
Health Technologists and Technicians	42
Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	11
Business Operations Specialists	11
Life Scientists	11

### Emerging Industries / Occupations

Agribusiness/Agriscience

Life Scientists and Business Operations Specialists

### Root Causes

- Lack of Training Capacity**
  - Shortage of qualified health care workers and lack of qualified training instructors
- Lack of Career Awareness**
  - Lack of awareness of Healthcare careers and qualifications
- Other Issues**
  - A lack of education in the workforce means applicants often don't possess required skills.

Identified Solutions →

### Identified Solutions

1.

Solution: <i>Agri-Venture Initiative</i>	Dollars Allotted: <i>\$977,795</i>
<p>Solution Description:</p> <p>The cornerstone of this initiative is to assist in new venture creation within the agriscience and agribusiness industries. This will be accomplished by directing award monies towards supporting ventures in business plan formation, technology assessments, and feasibility studies. By promoting growth in this sector, the region is preparing its human capital for the prosperity of tomorrow's economy; not just today's.</p>	<p>Outcomes Proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete 20 business plan support projects</li> <li>• Formation of 18 business plans</li> <li>• Approximate: \$2 million of new investment assured and \$2 million of new revenues to seed transformation or expansion</li> <li>• 12 new employment opportunities from expansion and/or formation</li> </ul>

2.

Solution: <i>Advancing Entrepreneurship</i>	Dollars Allotted: <i>\$858,005</i>
<p>Solution Description:</p> <p>This initiative will develop high school students as future entrepreneurs through six weeks of comprehensive instruction and the completion of a business plan. All students will participate in an annual business plan competition either individually or as a team. Ball State University is a key partner and brings its success in training and working with high schools to this endeavor. Eligibility is open to all students in the nine-county region.</p>	<p>Outcomes Proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 180 business plans</li> <li>• 180 Hoosiers trained</li> <li>• 180 completing solution</li> <li>• 5 plans submitted for additional opportunities</li> <li>• 3 receive commercial interest and/or investment</li> </ul>

3.

Solution: <i>Entrepreneurship - Business Mentor</i>	Dollars Allotted: <i>\$278,282</i>
<p>Solution Description:</p> <p>Select Ball State MBA students will be exposed to new technologies and work with seasoned entrepreneurs and business professionals. Students will be given start up resources to launch new business ventures in the region.</p>	<p>Outcomes Proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 new MBA/entrepreneurs retained in Indiana (5 in east central Indiana)</li> <li>• 5 plans funded</li> <li>• 5 new businesses/award</li> <li>• \$150,000 in revenue from new entities</li> <li>• 12-15 new job opportunities from new business entities</li> </ul>

## ***Solution Totals***

*\$2,114,082*

*More than 189 Hoosiers trained in entrepreneurship*

*30 business plans funded*

*More than \$2 million in new venture-retained investments*

*25+ new job opportunities from investments in new ventures*